727 value; the Germans then proceeded either to blow up the buildings or raze them to the ground. They thus destroyed 23 of the largest factories, the railway-car repair works, the machine-tool plant, the "Proletari" glass factory, two brick kilns, the "Odernik" sealer manufacturing plant, the meat-packing plants, eleven bakeries, confectionery and biscuit factories, the knitted-goods mills, and the "October" and "Krupskaya" garment factories.

In their inspection tours of the B.S.S.R., UNRRA Mission observers have noted wide-scale devastation and plunder everywhere; the most severely devastated areas being the northeast and central sections of the Republic. After a visit to northeast Byelorussia, Mission members reported that they had not seen a single factory intact. Devastation of industry was complete, and restoration has had to start from the ground up.

339 Starting from the ground up, however, is always difficult; and
727 it is particularly difficult in the B.S.S.R., where there is a shortage of everything required to do the job. Building materials, electric power, machinery, and transport are all critically scarce. The chief building material seems to be salvaged brick from the rubble of destroyed factory buildings; and most of the reconstruction work is being done by hand. Power equipment of the kind ordinarily seen on major construction jobs is almost completely lacking. UNRRA Mission members even as late as June 1946 had not seen a crane, powershovel, bulldozer, scraper, or tractor in use. Later in the year some of the UNRRA machinery began to arrive, but nowhere in quantities sufficient to make a real impact.

Lumber and bricks for reconstruction purposes are being manufactured at restored factories, but output is only a fraction of normal. Under the German occupation practically all sawmills in Byelorussia were looted of machinery and then demolished when the Germans were driven out. In Vitebsk oblast, all the large pre-war sawmills were destroyed. Up to June 1946 it had been possible to restore only a few. Polotsk oblast before the war had 12 large sawmills; in 1944 only about five to ten per cent. of the sawing frames remained. By mid-1946, although 17 sawmills were operating in this oblast, their work was proceeding on a very small scale, usually in the open air, and with limited equipment. Output of lumber was greater than before the war, but it consisted only of logs, beams, and rough-finished boards, since the equipment was inadequate for well finished work.

Brick plants were likewise destroyed by the Germans, and are in process of restoration. In Polotsk oblast, for example, there were before the war, 36 brick yards. In 1944 there was not one remaining in the entire oblast. In the summer of 1946 there were 17 back in partial operation; and 32 more were expected to be built in 1946-47.
339 The UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia supplied the following description of Polotsk brick factory No. 4, which had been partially restored by June 1946:

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horse-power stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

727 393 433 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May. Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

323 433 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials 433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]